

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-10 are pending. All claims were examined and rejected as being obvious over the combination of Deasy '211 in view of Myers '795. Such rejections are traversed in part and overcome in part.

Applicants thank Examiner Thahn for the courteous and helpful interview on April 18, 2007. At that interview, certain claim amendments were agreed upon, as discussed below, which will overcome the presently stated rejections.

The present invention is directed at a system comprising a first sleeve and a second sleeve for applying pressure to a body limb, as set forth in independent claim 1, such as an arm, as set forth in independent claim 5. A first sleeve having a foam lining is configured to be slid over the full length of the limb to apply an inward pressure to the limb. Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the sleeve covers the full length of the body limb, while claim 5 previously set forth that the sleeve covers the entire length of the arm from the shoulder to the wrist. The second sleeve is configured to be slid wholly over the entire length of the first sleeve to apply additional inward pressure onto the limb. Neither of the cited references, taken alone or in combination, teaches such a sleeve system for applying therapeutic pressure to body limbs.

The Deasy '211 patent describes an "elastic garment" which is intended to apply full body pressure to a patient's body, as seen in Fig. 1. While the body suit comprises different components, as shown in Figs. 2 to 5, and the different components may overlap when worn by the patient, as seen in Figs. 6 and 7, Deasy nowhere teaches or suggests a system comprising first and second sleeves, where both sleeves are configured to apply pressure over the full length of a body limb, where the second outer sleeve wholly covers the entire length of the first inner sleeve.

The Deasy elastic garment is provided as "several component parts" in order to allow it to be "easily put on" (col. 2, line 17). While the arm and leg portions do partially overlap, as shown in Figs. 6 and 7, neither component covers the entire arm or leg. At best, they show a partial overlap of the inner and outer sleeves 18 and 46 in the middle half of the arm, as shown in Fig. 7. Similarly, an inner sleeve 14 and an outer sleeve 22 are shown to overlap only

over the central portion of the leg in Fig. 6, leaving the lower portion of the calf and upper portion of the thigh covered only by a single layer.

Nor do the teachings of Myers '795 cure the deficiencies of Deasy '211. Myers shows a monolithic elastic bandage 1 which can be placed over an arm or a leg. The only additional structure comprises outer encircling bands 4 which may be "separately applied in order to give greater compression than the bandage alone at any desired point" (lines 42-46). Thus, in contrast to the present invention where a second outer sleeve is used to uniformly apply additional pressure over the entire length of the inner sleeve, the separate encircling bands 4 of Myers are intended to apply pressure only at a desired "point." Indeed, the purpose of the Myers device is to apply "localized compression, as of a tourniquet" as an improvement over bandages which press "equally on surrounding parts."

As is well known to the Examiner, a rejection for obviousness requires that each and every claimed element be present in the cited art. Applicants respectfully submit that this basic requirement has not been met in the present rejections. In particular, none of the prior art describes a first sleeve configured to be slid over the entire length of the patient's limb; moreover, none of the art shows a second sleeve "wholly" over a first sleeve, even while the first sleeve is not extending over the entire length of the patient's limb.

The Examiner points to Fig. 7 of Deasy as teaching "a first sleeve 18 configured to be slid over the entire length of the arm from the shoulder to the wrist." Such a characterization is inaccurate. The first sleeve 18, while extending from the wrist, terminates at a location well below the shoulder. See the illustration in Fig. 1 where the bead 58 terminates well below the shoulder. Moreover, the second sleeve 46 of Deasy is not configured to be slid over substantially the entire length of the first sleeve. As shown in both Figs. 1 and 7, a significant length of the first sleeve 18 near the wrist is not covered by the second sleeve 46. Moreover, it is believed that the requirement that the second sleeve be slid "wholly" over the first sleeve even more clearly distinguishes the teachings of Deasy.

The Examiner is reminded of the purpose of the present invention, which is to apply a uniform pressure along the entire length of the limb. To have the first and second

sleeves terminate at greatly spaced-apart distances, as taught by Deasy, is entirely contrary to this purpose.

While the Examiner asserts that extending the second sleeve of Deasy would be "an obvious matter of design choice," this assertion ignores the purpose of Deasy which is to provide a garment which is easy to take on and take off. By extending the length of the second sleeve 46 to reach the wrist of the user, the garment would be much more difficult to take off and would, in fact, be no different than a garment not formed for multiple components.

In an effort to even further distinguish Deasy, however, and as discussed at the interview, Applicants have amended both independent claims 1 and 5 to clarify that both the inner and outer sleeves comprise cylindrical bodies which are open at both ends and which have the same length when in place over the limb. This is directly contrary to Deasy where the outer sleeve is not a cylindrical body which is open at both ends and, in contrast, exists only as part of the coat-like portion 16. As the purpose of Deasy is to provide a body suit, removal of the sleeves to form a pair of open-ended cylinders having the same length is contraindicated.

For these reasons, Applicants believe that all remaining claims, as amended, are now in condition for allowance and request that the application be passed to issue at an early date.

If for any reason the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would in any way expedite prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

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